Assistance to adivasis displaced by bauxite mining in Visakhapatnam

*32. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether adequate measures have been taken to help landless poor tribals displaced by bauxite mining in areas of Visakhapatnam;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken to ensure that adivasis are not deprived of their rights in their domain?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) As per the information received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh, there are not leases for Bauxite in Visakhapatnam and consequently there is no displacement of tribals due to bauxite mining in Visakhapatnam.

(b) and (c) In view of (a) above, do not arise.

Contribution of EDUSAT

*33. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that EDUSAT, India's first satellite dedicated exclusively for educational services will shortly become operational to boost the satellite-based distance education programmes in the country;

(b) if so, the detailed features of the EDUSAT;

(c) the details of steps taken to publicise its role and the contribution EDUSAT can make so that educational institutions, professional organizations, etc. can use its capabilities for their educational and other training programmes; and

(d) the details of action plan drawn up to equip the schools, colleges etc. with the required terminals etc., State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) EDUSAT is primarily meant for providing connectivity to school, college and higher level of education and also to support non-formal

education including developmental communication. EDUSAT is specially configured to meet the growing demand for an interative satellite based distance education system for the country through audio-visual medium. The satellite will have multiple regional beams covering different parts of India—five Ku-band transponders with spot beams covering northern, north-eastern, eastern, southern and western regions of the country, a Ku-band transponder with its footprint covering the Indian mainland region and six C-bank transponders with their footprints covering the entrire country. The Ku and C-band transponders have high power to enable small dish antenna use of EDUSAT.

(c) ISRO is providing the space segment for EDUSAT System and demonstrate the efficacy of the satellite system for interactive distance education. Content generation is the responsibility of the user agencies. To help in this, ISRO, in cooperation with the user agencies, has already organised five conferences at regional level and one at the national level to create awareness about the EDUSAT and its capabilities. Another Conference on EDUSAT was organised at Bangalore on July 23, 2004 among the institutions of learning to elicit the views of experts in implementing the EDUSAT system. Presentation on EDUSAT was also made at the conference of the State Education Ministers in Delhi and in the meeting of Education Secretaries in September 2004. Minister of Education and Education Secretaries have been briefed about EDUSAT.

(d) Proposals have been received from different users, which include national level organizations like Consortium for Educational Commmunication (CEC)/University Grants Commission (UGC), Central Institution of Educational Technology (CIET), National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Indira Gandhi National Operation University (IGNOU) etc., as well as from regional level universities, state education departments, Indian Institute of Technologies (IITs) and teachers training and research organizations etc. Of these, seven proposals having national reach have been selected so far for utilization in the national beam.

Most Favoured Nation status to India by Pakistan

*34. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of grant of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to India by Pakistan to help free flow of trade between the two countries;